

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE AND UPDATE**North Strathcona County Regional Park Master Plan – What We Heard Report****Report Purpose**

To provide Council an update on the North Strathcona County Regional Park Master Plan.

Our Prioritized Strategic Goals

Goal 1 - Build strong communities to support the diverse needs of residents

Goal 6 - Provide facilities and services that are available and accessible to residents

Goal 7 - Provide opportunities for public engagement and communication

Report

In 2008, the River Valley Alliance Board of Directors endorsed the Plan of Action which identified land adjacent to the North Saskatchewan River within Strathcona County for a future trail and regional park.

On June 6, 2017, Council approved the strategic land acquisition of the 290-acre parcel adjacent to the North Saskatchewan River, which was previously used as a gravel quarry. This land provides the opportunity to develop future park space that has access to the North Saskatchewan River.

In early 2020, Strathcona County started to plan, design, and implement an Indigenous Engagement Strategy for the North Strathcona County Regional Park. The purpose of the Indigenous Engagement was to ensure that First Nations and Organizations could meaningfully contribute their recommendations to the regional park. The goal of the County is to enhance relationship building while ensuring that input from the First Nations and Organizations are respected and valued. This recognizes the importance of the Indigenous connection and history to this land along the North Saskatchewan River.

Engagement with the First Nations and Organizations was not able to commence until December 2020 due to Covid restrictions within the First Nations. In December 2020, Strathcona County administration hosted 17 First Nations and Organizations through a series of virtual workshops. These workshops provided an overview of the project and gathered their initial feedback. A second round of Indigenous Engagement occurred with 21 First Nations in July 2021, on site, in conjunction with the Edmonton Strathcona County footbridge project.

The information shared from both engagement sessions have been incorporated into the themes and topics presented in the public engagement material. Key themes that arose through the engagement included:

- A focus on accessibility
- Specific design suggestions
- Preservation of natural areas and habitats
- Suggestions for recreation and programming
- The importance of Indigenous awareness, representation, and protocol in the preparation and implementation of the Master Plan
- Suggestions about some Indigenous knowledge and history which could be incorporated into the park

Priorities Committee Meeting_Jun07_2022

In September 2021, Strathcona County hired O2 Planning and Design Inc to lead the North Strathcona County Regional Park Master Plan project. The objective of the Master Plan is to establish the provision and proposed development of outdoor recreation and culture infrastructure programs.

The site analysis and policy review were completed in late 2021. An innovative public engagement plan was created and implemented in February 2022 that resulted in the What We Heard Report. This included public engagement feedback in addition to the Indigenous feedback which has been used to create a vision for the Regional Park. This vision has helped guide and create two draft concepts.

These draft concepts will be shared with the public and stakeholders in June and with the First Nations and Organizations in July. Following public engagement, a second What We Heard Report will be completed in the fall with a final Master Plan and Implementation Strategy by end of Q4 2022.

Other Impacts

Policy: n/a

Financial/Budget: The park masterplan is a 15-year vision and capital budget requests for design and construction will be added to the 2028-2037 process.

Legislative/Legal: n/a

Interdepartmental: Planning and Development Services, Transportation Planning and Engineering, Transportation and Agriculture Services, Utilities, Family and Community Services, Emergency Services, Economic Development and Tourism, Communications

Master Plan/Framework: River Valley Alliance Plan of Action (2008), Recreation and Culture Strategy, Recreation and Culture Strategy Implementation Plan.

Communication Plan: A detailed Public Engagement and Communication Plan have been developed for this project.

Enclosure(s)

- 1 North Strathcona County Regional Park Master Plan – Phase I What We Heard from the Community
- 2 North Strathcona County Regional Park Master Plan – Phase I What We Heard Draft Report
- 3 North Strathcona County Regional Park Location Map